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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/644,793	08/24/2000	Jyoji Mishina	K-1825CIP2	2913

7590 11/15/2002

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EXAMINER

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ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3627

DATE MAILED: 11/15/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



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BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Paper No. 14

Application Number: 09/644,793
Filing Date: August 24, 2000
Appellant(s): MISHINA ET AL.

For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed August 29, 2002.

(1) *Real Party in Interest*

A statement identifying the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) *Related Appeals and Interferences*

A statement identifying the related appeals and interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the decision in the pending appeal is contained in the brief.

(3) *Status of Claims*

The statement of the status of the claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) *Status of Amendments After Final*

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct.

(5) *Summary of Invention*

The summary of invention contained in the brief is correct.

(6) *Issues*

The appellant's statement of the issues in the brief is correct.

(7) *Grouping of Claims*

The rejection of claims 1-16 stand or fall together because appellant's brief does not include a statement that this grouping of claims does not stand or fall together and reasons in support thereof. See 37 CFR 1.192(c)(7).

(8) *Claims Appealed*

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(9) Prior Art of Record

5,501,488	Saderholm et al.	3-1996
5,944,345	Hirai	8-1999
5,538,280	Gray et al.	7-1996

(10) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claims 1-4, 7-13, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saderholm et al. in view of Hirai. Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saderholm et al. in view of Hirai further in view of Gray et al. This rejection is set forth in prior Office Action, Paper No. 7.

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saderholm et al. in view of Hirai. Saderholm discloses an airbag (24, Fig. 2) with a first panel (10) and a second panel (11) that are connected along their peripheral portions by sewing yarn (17, 23) or any other suitable means (col. 3 line 38).

The airbag of Saderholm differs from the claimed invention in that it does not show the panels to be connected with an elastic adhesive disposed on the inner peripheral portions of the panels.

Hirai discloses an airbag (1, Fig. 2) with a first panel (3) and a second panel (2) that are connected along their inner peripheral portions by an elastic adhesive (2a, 3a, Fig. 4(b), col. 3 line 11+).

It would be obvious to one skilled in the art to modify the airbag of Saderholm to include panels connected along their inner peripheral portions with an elastic adhesive, as taught by Hirai, to provide a means for increasing the strength of the connection between airbag panels.

Applicant's prior art shown in Fig. 4b shows the seam (3) on the peripheral portions of the airbag panels (1', 2') to be covered by sealant (4) (application page 1 line 23+) and to have a yarn (3') sewn along the peripheral portion through the sealant to connect the panels. It would be obvious to one skilled in the art, especially in view of Hirai and applicant's prior art, that adhesive could also be disposed between the inner peripheral surfaces of the airbag panels to help hold the panels together. Additionally, applicant makes no comment regarding the motivation for combining the teachings of the Saderholm and Hirai references, and, thus, presumably accepts this combination.

(11) Response to Arguments

In argument (1) applicant states that the combination of Saderholm and Hirai does not provide an airbag with first and second panels connected along their inner peripheral portions by an elastic adhesive and yarn sewn within the width of the adhesive. Examiner argues that this is incorrect. Hirai discloses an airbag (1, Fig. 2) with a first panel (3) and a second panel (2) that are connected along their inner peripheral portions by an elastic adhesive (2a, 3a, Fig. 4(b), col. 3 line 11+). Applicant's prior art shown in Fig. 4b shows the seam (3) on the peripheral portions of the airbag panels (1', 2') to be covered by sealant (4) (application page 1 line 23+) and to have a

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yarn (3') sewn along the peripheral portion through the sealant to connect the panels.

Given the teachings of Saderholm, one skilled in the art could easily derive an airbag with first and second panels connected along their inner peripheral portions by an elastic adhesive and yarn within the width of the adhesive. Due to the structure of the airbag, it would operate in a manner similar to that described for the current invention.

Other details of the argument are addressed in the rejection.

In argument (2) applicant states that the inner seam (23) of Saderholm's airbag is located near the center of the airbag not the outer periphery as in the current invention. Examiner argues that the functionality of the inner seam disclosed by Saderholm is similar to that of the claimed invention and the location is not explicitly defined. It would be obvious to one skilled in the art that this seam could be placed at a variety of locations on the airbag panels.

In argument (3) applicant states that Gray does not show resins to be applied inside an airbag with a structure as recited in claim 14. Since one skilled in the art could use the teachings of Saderholm in view of Harai to provide the airbag of claim 14, it would also be obvious to one skilled in the art to use the teachings of Gray to apply a resin at any location within the airbag to provide reinforcement, as taught by Gray.

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For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Buchanan *CRB*
November 13, 2002

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